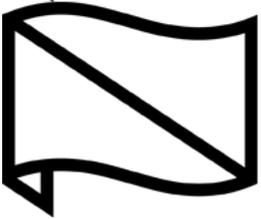E-INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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The Manchurian and Abyssinian Crises and the Failure of Collective Security

[Anna Costa](#), Aug 11 2011, 7134 views

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Both the Manchurian and the Abyssinian crises represented instances of the failure of collective security as it was framed by the major powers in the interwar period. By looking at the Sino-Japanese dispute in East Asia and at the Italo-Ethiopian conflict in Africa, this paper argues that the breakdown in enforcement of collective security was ultimately produced by three main causes. The first is a series of problems intrinsic in the

formalization of collective security by the League of Nations, namely a loose legal and conceptual formulation and vague terms of enforcement. A second cause is broadly ascribable to the socio-political, economic and security circumstances of the international system between the First and Second World Wars as brought about by the 1929-1933 financial and economic crisis. The third and weightiest cause is a deep contradiction at the level of how individual countries (here the focus will be on Italy, Japan, Germany, Great Britain, France and the United States) understood collective security. The latter point needs qualification. Collective security, as it was framed by the major powers in the interwar period, was a concept in part oxymoronic and in part empty: it was oxymoronic to the extent that specific national security interests proved irreconcilable with the idea of security for all by all; it was empty to the extent that when perceived national security aims did not openly contradict the principle of collective security the two often did not coincide, a gap that translated into a powerful disincentive to embrace collective security as an ideal and enforce it as a practice.
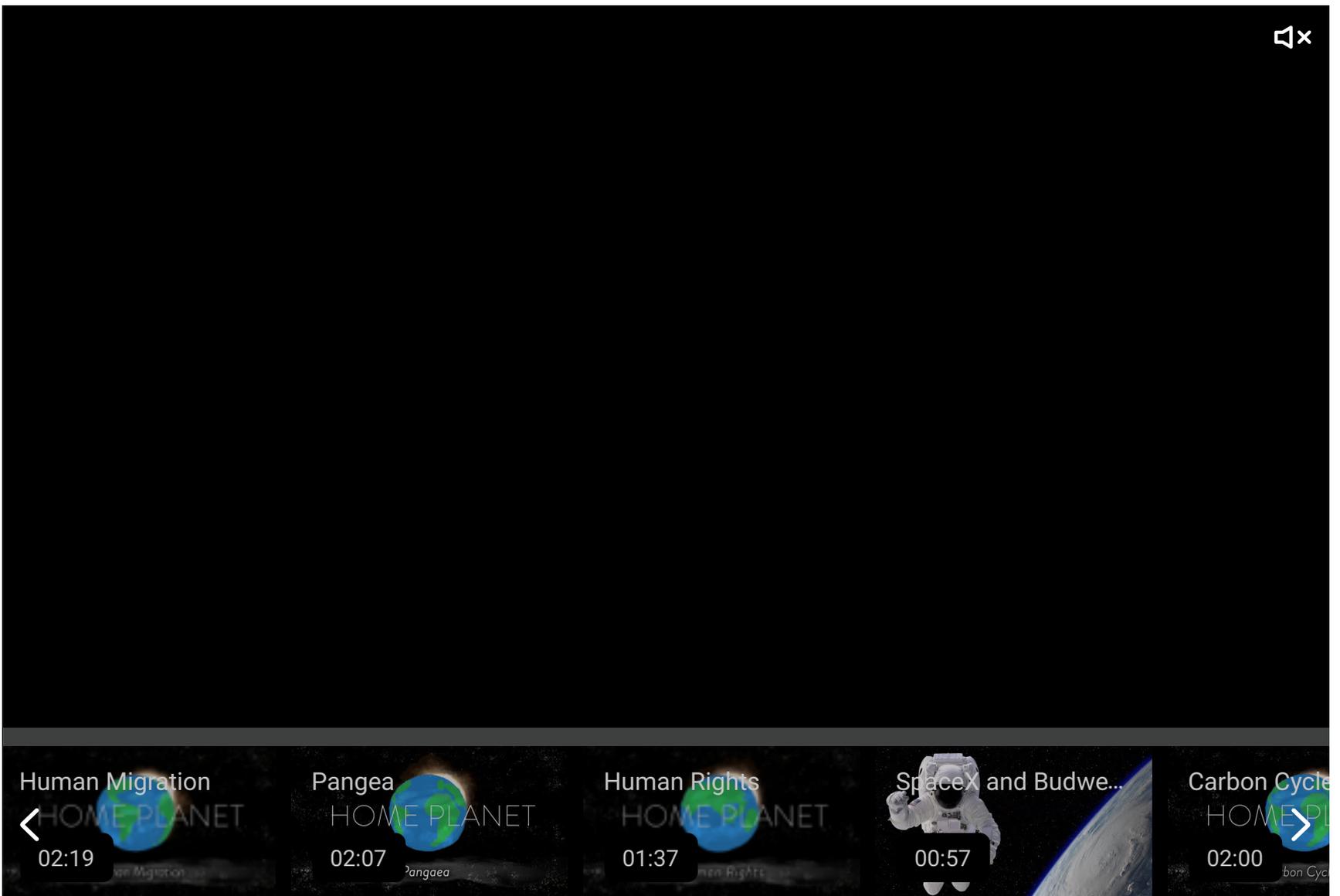
A brief contextualization of the concept of collective security will help in setting the discussion. Article 11 of the Covenant of the League of Nations states that '*Any* war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the Members of the League or not, is hereby declared a matter of concern to the *whole* League, and the League shall take any action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations'[1][my italics]. Article 11 is extremely relevant as it encapsulates the idea of collective security as was invoked both by the Chinese in their appeal to the League of Nations after Japanese aggression and by the Ethiopians after the Italian mobilization against them. 'On September 21st, 1931, the representatives of the Chinese government in Geneva wrote to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations asking him to bring to the attention of the Council the dispute between China and Japan which had arisen from the events which took place at Mudken on the night of September 18th-19th, and appealed to the council, under *article 11* of the covenant, to ''take immediate steps to prevent the further development of a situation endangering the peace of nations'''[2] (my italics). In the same vein, Haile Selassie recalls how he invoked 'the principles of the Covenant' and 'urged the procedure of conciliation and arbitration'[3].

Reference to article 11 by both the Chinese and Ethiopians rested on the premise that their nations had been attacked. After taking into consideration detailed reports from the Chinese and Japanese sides and weighing both versions of what happened on the night of 18 September 1931, the League of Nations Commission came to the conclusion that 'the military operations of the Japanese troops during this night [18 September] […] cannot be regarded as measures of legitimate self-defence'[4]. Although the initial episode of the Italo-Abyssinian dispute, the Wal Wal incident on 5 December 1934, was left unsanctioned by the League's Commission of Arbitration, which declared that no government could be held responsible for the Wal Wal

incident and that no international liability was to be incurred[5], the aggressive character of Italian intentions is illustrated clearly by the words of the US Ambassador in Rome in the summer of 1935: 'In my mind there remains no vestige of doubt that Italy is irrevocably determined to proceed in Africa and that from whatever quarter opposition is offered it will be met by subjected mass attack'[6]. Even though it took Italy to resort to war against Ethiopia before the League took a clear stance on the Italo-Ethiopian dispute, it did so at last with the proposed imposition of economic sanctions. The inconclusive outcome of this policy will be explored later. For now suffice it to remark on a crucial fact: at the beginning of both crises, the Chinese and Ethiopian governments thought of responding to aggression by appealing to the League of Nations in name of the concept of collective security. This indicates that they not only attributed legitimacy to the organization and what it stood for, but also that they believed adherence to collective security would be a viable security policy for their countries. In what follows reasons will be given for why these hopes proved misplaced.

One of the main reasons why collective security proved unworkable lays in a series of problems intrinsic to the formulation of collective security by the League of Nations. More specifically, in drafting the articles of the Covenant its architects had to reconcile internationalist principles and ideals with the preservation of national freedom of action: the resulting compromise was a legal document that proved weak in its binding power. Looking more closely at the formulation of Article 16 of the Covenant helps understand why the League proceeded as inconclusively as it did in its policy of economic sanctions towards Italy: 'Should any Member of the League resort to war in disregard of its covenants under Articles 12, 13, or 15, it shall ipso facto be deemed to have committed an act of war against all other Members of the League, which hereby undertake immediately to subject it to [economic sanctions] It shall be the duty of the Council in such case to *recommend* to the several Governments concerned what [military measures to take]'[7] (my italics). Quoting article 16 at length shows the distinction drawn in the Covenant between economic sanctions and military action, and lack of stringent obligations as far as the latter are concerned. Crucially, as Dinstein argues, this formulation forbids one from speaking of a veritable collective security system[8].

An example of the internal failings of collective security as framed by the Covenant can also be found in the Manchurian crisis. As Northedge points out, the Covenant, like all other arrangements to preserve peace, had been designed with the First World War in mind. Its clauses were therefore apt for meeting the eventuality of traditional, officially-declared wars, but inapt for dealing with the kind of sudden, camouflaged attacks staged by both Italy and Japan[9].

The unworkability of collective security resulted from a second set of determinants beyond the problems specific to the formulation of the concept. From the day of the Japanese aggression in Manchuria on 18 September 1931 to the date of the establishment of Manchuguo as a puppet state under Japanese control in 1932, the major world powers were not able to react effectively to Japanese action. Part of what impaired them both in their resolve and in their concrete efforts was the financial and economic crisis that from 1929 brought them to their knees and diverted their attention and resources away from Manchuria and Ethiopia towards their national troubles. Just two days after the beginning of the Manchurian crisis Britain was forced to abandon the Gold Standard. The United States was also plagued by the economic depression, a situation which eroded the basis of congressional and public support that would have otherwise been available to Secretary of State Stimson[10], himself eager to get involved in the resolution of the Sino-Japanese dispute as per his own words in *The Far Eastern Crisis*: 'Japan's attack upon China in September, 1931, was of interest to the American people not only because it was an attack upon the fundamental basis of collective action […] but because it was also a destructive assault upon the good relations which must exist among neighbour nations'[11]. France was also coping with domestic economic problems and was at any rate less well equipped to deter Japan than either Britain or the US would have been with their naval power endowment and presence in the East Asian region.

The financial crisis undermined the workability of collective security in at least two ways: it not only played a very large role in preventing the enforcement of collective security after the latter was challenged, as briefly

outlined above, but it contributed heavily to bringing the challenge about. The serious economic distress produced by the crisis, and the further problems caused by the global wave of protectionism that ensued, created a fertile ground for the transformation of liberal societies into militaristic and fascist ones. Had Japan not been suffering from a substantial decrease in trade with both the US and China, the latter to the advantage of the US, especially due to a sharp fall in the price of silk on which its export-intensive economy relied heavily and through which many a Japanese peasant made a living, it is not clear that the militarists would have acquired as much power as they did.

In the case of the Italo-Abyssinian crisis, it can be hypothesised that the financial crisis and protectionism disrupted the system of economic interdependence that would have otherwise incentivized Mussolini not to risk antagonizing economic partners to pursue his aims in Africa. The crisis produced incentives for militarist, dictatorial regimes like Mussolini's to engage in expansionist ventures using propagandistic and demagogic arguments to divert popular attention away from domestic problems, which the crisis exacerbated, whilst mobilizing people by pointing at an external solution to such problems[12]. It is not the intention of this paper to reduce the changes in the internal political set up of Japan which gave strength and autonomy to the Kwantung army's initiatives in Manchuria to mere political economic pressures; nor is it its intention to argue that Italian imperialism was caused primarily by the financial crisis. However, the crisis substantiated the propagandistic, demagogic argument that the problems of Japan and Italy lay *abroad* and should be solved by acting forcefully abroad.

In the introduction, the third cause of the failure of peace by collective action has been anticipated as residing in a deep contradiction at the level of how major powers understood collective security. National security and other interests proved impossible to reconcile with the idea of collective security because national aims and ambitions, when not openly contradicting the principle of security for all by all, did not coincide with it. This gap provided the strongest disincentive from *embracing* collective security as an ideal and *enforcing* it as a practice. I shall begin my analysis of this disincentive by looking at the aggressors. Italy and Japan could hardly embrace the notion of collective security, despite both countries being signatories of the treaties and conventions that upheld the principle (most prominently the Treaty of Versailles, the Washington Treaties and the Pact of Paris). Collective security was framed in such a way that discouraged challenging the status quo and especially prohibited doing so in an aggressive manner. Although nominally in the circle of great powers, since the signing of the Peace Treaty of Versailles in 1919 resentment had been mounting in both Italy and Japan over the second-class treatment they had received from Britain, France and the United States. Indeed, Italian and Japanese frustration did not merely stem from disregard of their concrete interests, but also from a more general sense of being treated as inferior: the non-inclusion of the racial equality clause in the League's Covenant and discriminatory immigration policies embittered Japan no less than more practical matters; in the same vein, the offence took by Orlando and the Italian delegation at Versailles weighed heavily in shaping a collective memory of victimization.

But it was not merely revisionism that made Italian and Japanese foreign policy incompatible with the principle of collective security: both countries were pursuing expansionist aims that, for how anachronistic, predated the outbreak of the Great War[13]. Another way to explain why the fact that Italy and Japan were signatories of several treaties renouncing war and promoting peace proved incongruous is to look at the role of war in both countries' political culture. As Baer explains, it was not Italy's colonial aspirations that Britain objected to but Italy's resolve to achieve them by war: what might have just been a case of imperial rivalry, or an African question, became a European and therefore international matter to be formally labelled as a challenge to collective security[14]. Yet it was precisely war that proved a non-negotiable part of Mussolini's aims in Ethiopia: 'War alone brings up to its highest tension all human energy […] the growth of empire, that is to say the expansion of the nation, is an essential manifestation of vitality, and its opposite a sign of decadence'[15].

The other major powers did not enforce collective security as a practice, whilst subscribing to it in theory and

in words. French national priorities were such that the protection of the Chinese and Ethiopians only ranked beneath other concerns. In the case of the Manchurian crisis, the French were busy with surviving the impact of the financial crisis and did not see a dispute far off in the Asia as superseding much more pressing European economic and military security concerns. In the case of the Abyssinian crisis, the issue at the top of the French foreign policy agenda, i.e. maintaining the safeguard of a strong alliance against Hitler's Germany, dictated the French policy of accommodation and conciliation towards Italy which was embodied by the Hoare-Laval plan, devised in December 1935 by the British Foreign Secretary and the French Prime Minister as an alternative to the imposition of sanctions to Italy. As pointed out by Robertson, in the last resort the League's failure to save Ethiopia was caused as much by Hitler's occupation of the demilitarized zone in the Rhineland as by the Hoare-Laval negotiations and their publication[16].

Britain was the other architect of the Hoare-Laval plan, which attempted to accommodate Italian imperialist ambitions so as not to antagonize Rome whilst preserving French and British interests in Africa. The plan was for Britain an 'endeavour to evade its League commitments and to sacrifice Ethiopia on the altar of European security'[17]. As put rather poignantly by Haile Selassie in his second appeal to the League in 1936, 'Unhappily for Ethiopia […] a certain Government considered that the European situation made it imperative at all costs to obtain the friendship of Italy. The price paid was the abandonment of Ethiopian independence to the greed of the Italian Government'[18]. Being France and England the pillars of the League of Nations, it is not surprising that the incongruity in their understanding of national versus collective and European versus collective security ultimately undermined the practical adherence of the League to its cardinal principles. As to the British stance during the Manchurian crisis, London saw it in its interest to go no further than to bandwagon with the US limited policy of non-recognition. As Northedge points out, it was only when British interests rather than Chinese interests were directly affected during the Shanghai crisis that Britain leaped into action, only to step back again once those narrow interests were secured[19].

Whereas European powers saw Manchuria as geographically remote, within the US, greater physical proximity translated in heightened concerns about regional stability. Despite the American isolationist stance in the interwar period, there was awareness at the level of government of the high stakes the US had on the developing East Asian balance of power and on the need to keep Japanese expansionist ambitions in check. In the end, however, the internal contradiction between this awareness and isolationism meant that US foreign policy was only tentative and inconclusive, with the lukewarm reaction of non-recognition of Manchuguo epitomizing this attitude. It was not mainly the financial crisis that limited US involvement in the Sino-Japanese dispute to the promotion of the 'non-recognition' doctrine: deeper reasons explain the American non-committal position, not least that the US was still in the process of defining the scope and content of its foreign policy interests and its role in the world. In the same vein, the US had enough stakes in the Abyssinian crisis to allow for its involvement, but not enough stakes to justify decisive action. As Braddick points out, the Italo-Ethiopian conflict per se did not threaten any substantial American interest, but the devotion of British and French attention and resources to this African/European dispute provided too tempting an opportunity for Japanese expansionism, and the latter problem directly concerned the United States[20]. Here, the US played at strengthening its alliance with Britain by backing London's foreign policy towards Italy as a *quid pro quo*, i.e. getting British support in keeping Japanese expansionism in check in return[21]. Whereas for France, Britain and the United States collective security merely episodically overlapped with their respective limited foreign policy priorities, German foreign policy interests were best served by the weakening of the world peace system. With its withdrawal from the League in 1933 and with the remilitarization of the Rhineland in 1936, Hitler's Germany seriously undermined both the legitimacy and scope of action of the League by severely constraining the foreign policy options available to Britain and France, especially during the Abyssinian crisis.

This essay has provided three main explanations for the breakdown of collective security during and after the Manchurian and Abyssinian crises. Whilst all of these explanations are needed to make sense of the unworkability of collective security in the 1930s, the third cause has been presented as the weightiest in

virtue of an existing hierarchy between the explanations provided. Weaknesses intrinsic in the formulation of collective security, whilst impairing the efficient application of the principles of the covenant, did not doom it to fail. I would argue that the loose formulation of collective security *did not so much prevent its efficient application, but rather allowed for its inefficient application*. Making this distinction is crucial in understanding the causality behind the failure of collective security: a loose formulation of the principle was a concomitant but not primary cause of its unworkability. In the same vein, reference to the financial crisis helps explaining the incentives for aggressors to challenge the concept of collective security and the reluctance of the other major powers to devote scarce resources to its defence, but this is only a superficial explanation. As mentioned in the essay, the lack of concrete proaction on the part of the major powers in defence of Chinese and Ethiopian interests was replaced by prompt mobilization when their perceived interests were directly at stake. This essay has therefore identified a third causal explanation as preeminent in explaining the failure of collective security, i.e. the opposition between collective security and specific national and regional security –and other, interests. This gap translated in an incentive to challenge collective security at worst, as in the case of the aggressors, and in a disincentive to embrace it as an ideal and enforce it as a practice at best, as in the case of the other major powers.

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Date written: November 2010

Comments

[Contemporary global terrorism and the meaning and practice of 'national security'](#)

In this essay I will argue that the responses to contemporary global terrorism undertaken by the US and its

allies were realist, state centric and preoccupied with maintaining their own interest – a strategy underpinned by old and discredited ways of pursuing security (Bellamy et al. 2008). Instead, I will suggest that a critical approach would have, and would be, more successful. Rather than focusing on the state as the central actor in international relations, critical international theory focuses on the individual, turning the narrow scoped 'national security' into a wider conception of 'human security' where the individual is central.

In much of the recent literature on the 'War on Terror' it would appear that academics tend to agree that the realist, militaristic policies of the US have ultimately failed, that there is evidence to show that there was more Islamic terrorism in 2008 than there was in the five years previous and that the 'moral crusades' have created more problems than they have solved (Bellamy et al. 2008). Many theorists are therefore turning to critical international theory where focus is on an individual level and on the need to understand the context of the plight of the extremist group in order to combat terrorism (Jackson, 2007). Furthermore, as this 'war on terror' is being waged on what is essentially, a tactic, it is not confined to state boundaries (Jackson, 2007). This threat is an altogether new kind, involving non-state actors in an increasingly globalised world where defence of security cannot be addressed through the deployment of troops. Thus, as critical theorists propose, security needs to be addressed in a wholly different way.

This essay will firstly address how 'security' and 'terrorism' can be defined, moving on to discuss why the US-led war on terror has been a failure, examining its policies, its realist world outlook and its relationship with its allies. Within this, I will look at why a critical perspective, centered round the individual would be useful and possibly more successful in dealing with contemporary global terrorism.

As a concept, 'security' appears to be a contested one. While most agree that it implies freedom from threats to acquired values (Williams, 2008), there is disagreement as to whether the main focus of security should be on an individual, national or international level (Baylis, 2008).

In recent history and during the Cold War, national security was prevalent in the international realm, yet in light of the 'War on Terror' security is starting to be seen differently. Focus on national security is and has been waning as the sovereign state begins to lose some of its pre-eminence (Hobden & Wyn-Jones, 2008). Many security analysts view the process of globalisation and it's associated 'risks' as being largely outside the control of nation states and that only the development of a global community can deal with this adequately (Baylis, 2008). However, realistically, this development is not all that simple, illustrated by the complex and diverse six main threats to global security that the UN has identified (UN report: A more secure world, 2004). These are economic and social threats including poverty and disease; inter-state conflict; internal conflict including civil war and genocide; nuclear and biological weaponry; terrorism and transnational organised crime, including the illegal drug trade and human trafficking. Of these identified threats, it is the first three which account for the vast majority of lives lost yet members of the UN accord them with different levels of priority. Hence, the mission of the UN to devise collective security policies faces great difficulty, if states fail to agree on what is most important (Williams, 2008). Therefore, it is possible to claim that the liberal notion of a 'natural harmony of interests' (Dunne, 2008) among states is flawed and that instead of focusing on state centricity in the pursuit of security, the alternative, critical approach suggests a personal emancipation from the state and a need to re-conceptualise security from the national to the global (Baylis, 2008).

In general terms, terrorism can be defined as the use of violence against civilians by non-state actors to attain political goals. Common grievances that give rise to terrorism include poverty and limits to political freedom (Kydd & Walter, 2006). Terrorist groups tend to have common goals often including change to regime, to territory and to policy; attempts to socially control and maintain a desired status-quo (Kydd & Walter 2006). Terrorist tactics employed by extremist groups have in some cases, achieved their intentions and more often that not have created mass awareness of their cause through the ever increasing global reach of the 24 hour media.

Critical international theory suggests that in order to combat terrorism, conflict needs to be contextualised and historicised in order to understand the relationships between violent terrorist action and wider social movements; for example it is restricting to examine the Italian Red Brigades without analysing the left-wing movement of the 1960s and early 70s and the behaviour of the Italian state towards such groups (Gunning, 2007). It would seem necessary then, that when constructing security policy, attention should be focused on a more human level, by analysing why people join extremist groups and addressing those issues rather than engaging in militaristic policies that put more innocent lives at risk, burdening human beings with preventable suffering; (Devetak, 2005) a successful counter-terrorism strategy may be possible.

In the events of September 11, 2001 3,000 innocent lives were lost when civilian aircraft were hijacked by Al Qaeda, demolishing a symbol of the US economic way of life: the World Trade Centre. While this loss of life was devastating, when compared to the 2,000,000 people who died in civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Bellamy, 2008) and the 40,000 children who die every day as a cause of preventable illness and malnutrition (Unicef, 1990), the figure seems less significant. Therefore, it could be argued that the importance of 9/11 lies not in the loss of life but in the 'global dimension' of an attack on the hegemonic US, reflecting a threat to world order (Bellamy, 2008). The Bush administration held the view that what affects them, affects the whole world (Bellamy, 2008), an opinion shared by Kofi Annan who claimed in the immediate aftermath that the terrorists who attacked the United States on September 11 'aimed at one nation but wounded an entire world… an attack on all humanity' (Annan, 2001). However, it was observed by the UN Secretary General in 2004 that not one African leader counted terrorism as a major threat confronting their region (Bellamy, 2008), presumably considering other, previously mentioned security issues much higher.

It was also not the first attack of its kind. Whilst unprecedented in the US; terrorism had been used as a tactic by extremist groups in the Global South many times before. For example, hard-line Hindu activists bombed the Babri mosque in Uttar Pradesh, India in 1992, an attack that was followed by Muslim riots that killed a number of people similar to that of 9/11 (Hensman, 2001). Terrorist tactics have also commonly been employed by the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) in their aim to create a separate homeland for the Tamils known as the Tamil Eelam (State) in the North Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka. According to Hensman (2001), the LTTE encourages women to become suicide bombers, premised on 'blind support for the supreme leader'. However, before judging the actions of these 'activist' groups, critical international theorists believe it essential to uncover why they believe them justifiable; i.e. for some of the many war-traumatised Tamil children to take revenge against the Sinhalese and the Sri Lankan government.

This suggests that whilst 9/11 was a shock to the Global North; as stated earlier, its significance did not lie in either the act itself or the lives lost. It was significant because it struck at the heart of the American way of life, of their economic status and wealth. It violated widely held Western beliefs of how war should be fought (Bellamy, 2008) and has, through the subsequent War on Terror shown that wars cannot always be fought with raw muscle power (Saigol, 2002). Hence, critical international theorists claim that to address global terrorism, the stark inequalities and differences that face the world need to be addressed before progress in global security is achieved.

The political repercussions of 9/11 have led to an erosion of human rights, civil liberties and democratic values within the US and many other nations. There has been virtual suspension of the established norms for the settlement of international disputes through peaceful negotiation (Joseph & Sharma, 2002) as the US placed itself outside the rules, norms and institutions of international society (Devetak, 2005). It would appear that when a country declares itself in a 'State of Emergency', democracy and liberal institutionalism weaken as the executive power of the state government grows. Hensman (2001) writes of the UN that it has been side-lined with regards to the War on Terror, the US and its allies preferring a state-led approach. Furthermore, Saigol (2002) describes UN action as "toothless", perhaps providing depth to the realist theory that states will act in self-interest and in matters of high security, national interest and power will prevail over

international law.

Directly following 9/11 136 countries offered the US military assistance for the War on Terror (Pasicolan & Hwang, 2002), showing that, as stated by liberal institutionalist theory, states will cooperate when they feel that policy mostly reflects their interest. However, in 2003 many influential states, including Germany and France opposed the US-led war in Iraq. It was said by the then US Secretary of Defence, Donald Rumsfeld that 'if one leads and the cause is right, over time others will follow' (Pasicolan & Hwang, 2002). Yet in reality, almost ten years on, the US is still engaged in a long protracted war and considering that the countries allies are dwindling, the cause may have been wrong from the start.

However, in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, domestic terrorism laws were enacted in the name of 'national security' across many nations. Examples of laws in Germany, Italy, Japan and many other states include the funding of security and law enforcement agencies, increased air traffic security and the freezing of the assets of suspected terrorists (Pasicolan & Hwang, 2002). In the United Kingdom measures were taken outside established criminal law to allow internment without trial, restrictions on residence and movement, exclusion and banishment regarding undesirable 'aliens' and denial of entry to the country, or deportation from it (Bonner, 2007). However, due to the adoption of the Human Rights Act (HRA) through the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into UK law, executive measures are curtailed more than in previous years as judges have been seen to be taking a more activist role in challenging government policy. For example following the London 7 July bombings in 2005 Blair set out measures to amend the UK's counter terror law; resulting in the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005 and replacing the detention scheme in the Anti-terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001 which had been declared incompatible by the House of Lords with the HRA in December 2004 (Bonner, 2007).

In the US, 9/11 triggered a reinvigoration of American nationalism (Bhattacharyya, 2008), in the months immediately following the attacks. The Bush administration created the Department of Homeland Security and passed the Patriot Act in 2001 allowing the invasion of the privacy of citizens, as law enforcement agencies could then intercept calls and emails without warrant. This shows that in a 'State of Emergency' even the US Constitution, held so dear in the hearts of many Americans, can be side-lined with regards to Amendment IV. Joseph and Sharma (2002) describe 'national security' as a convenient peg on which to hang long term agendas of managing and controlling a population; demonstrated I believe in the US domestic response to terrorism. Furthermore, images portrayed in the media, of manacled detainees at Guantanamo Bay have provoked international outrage, but the horror they face is not primarily of a physical nature; it is the threat of confinement, without trial or access to legal representation (Meek, 2003). The existence of Guantanamo and reports of the torturous treatment that takes place portrays a further contradiction to the US constitution, showing that whilst the US believes its citizens have entrenched human rights, it does not show the same respect for others. Of internment without trial it was said by President Nyerere of Tanzania that 'you are imprisoning a man when he has not broken any written law… you are restricting his liberty and making him suffer… for what you think he intends to do, or is trying to do, or for what you believe he has done, few things are more dangerous to the freedom of a society than that' (Bonner, 2007). Evidently, there is a call for a new kind of security, where the focus surrounds the individual, and where nation states treat people equally, providing them with social security, human security and rights (Saigol, 2002).

The core commitment of Critical Terrorism Studies is to a broad conception of emancipation, understood as the realisation of greater human freedom and human potential, in social and individual well-being (Jackson, 2007). However, the problem surrounding enacting such policies and establishing a new set of arrangements that will better promote freedom, justice and equality across the globe (Devetak, 2007) is that cooperation between states is essential but difficult to achieve; as are global rather than international institutions, where states have equal status – an alternative to the current world order where the Global North exploits the Global South. Marxists and critical theorists would argue that it is due to capitalism that this inequality is so vivid; that the nature of capitalism leads developed countries to accumulate wealth through dispossession of capital

from peripheral or developing states (Linklater, 2005). The US, as the world's richest country and hegemonic power, should accept responsibility in this status through finding ways to share its wealth, resources and technology, assuring that access to 'global public goods' including health care, housing, food, water and sanitation is given priority in international relations. Only then, according to Petchesky (2001) will security encompass these aspects of well-being and the possibility of universal human security be achieved.

Some of the literature speaks of a 'third possibility' (Saigol, 2002); a new non-aligned movement for human rights and democracy, an alternative to the existing 'camps' of 'us', (the US and its allies) and 'them' (the extremist organisations carrying out acts of terrorism) (Hensman, 2001). The very attempt to split the world up into divided camps fuels conflict and deepens the belief that this is a war of culture, an East vs. West conflict, a war in apparent 'defence of democracy' (Bhattacharyya, 2008). Critical theorists suggest that response to terrorism should begin with engaging with extremism at a human level (Gunning, 2007); that in understanding the motivations behind such groups, new ways of preventing attacks on innocent civilians for political causes can be uncovered. The 'fundamental rethink' of the meaning and practice of national security is slowly occurring as the notion of human security as a viable alternative grows in possibility. However, the implementation of a global human security is difficult to achieve; unachievable it could be argued with the current world order. The US, while its militaristic policies and realist world outlook have failed in the War in Iraq; its army still stands on their soil, Guantanamo remains open and the Long War rages on. Furthermore, while the Global North remains engaged in these hostilities other important security challenges such as the promotion of human rights and environmental sustainability have been pushed aside (Bellamy, 2008).

The UN's 2006 and 2010 counter terrorism strategy outlines a basis for a common strategic and operational framework to fight terrorism; including addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and ensuring the respect of human rights (un.org/terrorism). However, implementation of UN policies relies on the cooperation of states, and as realists would suggest, states will only follow in their own interest. How to alter state views from a national security perspective, to that of a broader conception of human security which, according to critical theorists would be more beneficial to the globe remains difficult, but I would argue, well worth working towards. Terrorism has no location or boundaries, it does not reside in a geography of its own; its homeland is disillusionment and despair (Petchesky, 2001). The best weapon, according to Petchesky (2001) to eradicate terrorism from the soul lies in the solidarity of the international world; in respecting the rights of all people of this globe to live in harmony, reducing the ever-increasing gap between the North and South.

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Comments

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Non-Traditional Security Issues: Should HIV/AIDS be Securitized?

HIV/AIDS was first encountered more than two decades ago, and it has been reported that 60 million people have been infected by the virus, leading to 20 million deaths due to the illness (Elbe; 2002; pp.159). In 2008, the region the most affected by the epidemic was Sub-Saharan Africa constituting more than two-third of all the people living with HIV and approximately three quarter of AIDS-related deaths (UNAIDS Fact Sheet; 2009; pp.1).

Traditional understandings of security such as Realism have long dominated the field, in particular the Cold War era. This view on security identifies the state as a primary unit to be secured through military means in an anarchic system, with a focus on the preservation of the balance of power, deterrence as well as arms race. Thus, Realism including its emphasis on high politics and on its 'black-boxes' approach of the state leaves little place in order to study broader fields such as health security that states may face, and therefore does not take into account HIV/AIDS as a threat to human, national or international security (Glaser; 2010; pp.17). However, although the epidemic has had dramatic effects on human lives and could rightly be viewed as a humanitarian issue, scholars have recently emphasised the growing negative effects of HIV/AIDS on core pillars of states, receiving ever more attention by policy-makers as a potential threat to national security (Elbe; 2010; pp.418). Former Secretary-General Kofi Annan emphasised the far-reaching ramifications on economic, social and political stability in Africa of the illness forming the basis for the subsequently created Resolution 1302 of the Security Council, which constitutes the cornerstone of the securitizing process of HIV/AIDS (McInnes; 2006; pp.337). The broad aim of this essay will be to investigate the process of

securitization of HIV/AIDS in the context of the African continent. This will be undertaken using the Copenhagen School, as it is an efficient analytical tool especially regarding to its securitization theory put forward by Barry Buzan.

The Copenhagen School demonstrates how an issue can be securitized 'meaning the issue is presented as an existential threat, requiring emergency measures and justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure' (Buzan et al.; 1998; pp.24). Before this stage, an issue may also be 'nonpoliticized', implying that the state does not handle it, or move to a 'politicized' phase in which 'the issue is part of public policy requiring government decision' (Buzan et al.; 1998; pp.23). The Copenhagen School employs a 'multi-sectoral' analysis, in which the referent object and the threat may differ in each sector (Emmers; 2010; pp.137). In other words, the school defines, as their different levels of analysis, the following five sectors: military sector with the state as referent object; the political sector with sovereignty, the economic sector with national economies or firms; societal sector with collective identities representing the referent object and the environmental sector with species or habitats (Buzan et al.; 1998; pp.22-23 and Emmers; 2010; pp.137). From that point of view, the Copenhagen School should be credited for its attempts to broaden the security agenda necessary for the present investigation; to areas which will provide a good basis for examining the effects of HIV/AIDS. It could be argued that Buzan's theory remains state-centric as it traditionally refers to the state or essential components of the state in its definition of security, illustrating continuity with traditional approach to security (Buzan et al.; 1998; pp.21). This aspect may prove particularly useful as this essay is primarily concerned with HIV/AIDS posing a threat to national security in Africa.

This essay argues that it is necessary to focus on several aspects of the state in order to understand the full extent to which HIV/AIDS poses an existential threat to African national securities, while also suggesting that a human point of view should not be discarded. It will be proposed that the speech act theory of the Copenhagen School is situated at the centre of securitizing HIV/AIDS in Africa. However, it will show that such process has not been uniform, therefore undermining the statement that HIV/AIDS constitutes a threat to African security. Finally, this study makes a case, based on argument held by Stephan Elbe that it is necessary to take into account normative dimensions in securitizing HIV/AIDS. The first part of this essay will focus on the impacts of HIV/AIDS on African states at several levels including military, political, as well as societal. Speech acts from leaders concerning the epidemic and the ways the disease has been framed in Africa will form the subject of the second part of this essay; while in the third part the normative concerns regarding the securitization of HIV/AIDS will be investigated.

It is crucial to begin by examining the effects of the epidemic and to determine whether they are significant enough so as to form a substantial threat to African security.

In terms of the military implications of HIV/AIDS, a convincing argument was proposed that the epidemic has negatively affected national armed forces. Elbe notes that HIV rates among African militaries are systematically higher than the rates of the populations at large. He argues that soldiers are usually recruited from a pool of sexually active age; and that away from their communities enduring physical and psychological strains, their likelihood to undergo unprotected sexual relations as a way to reduce their anxiety is high (Elbe; 2002; pp.163). Moreover, as soldiers trained for combat, they are more likely to 'valorize violent and risky behaviour' in a military environment that is known to attract sex workers (Elbe; 2002; pp.163). These aspects are thought to be playing a major role in exposing the armed forces to sexually transmitted viruses such as HIV. It is relevant to highlight the links between AIDS in the military and the risks for security. It is noted that AIDS is in some cases the primary cause of death in the military (Singer; 2002; pp.9). The epidemic can provoke, in already deteriorated armies, 'a dangerous weakening of military capabilities' by causing the loss, of not only regular soldiers but more importantly, the death of specialized personnel and officers (Singer; 2002; pp.9 and Elbe; 2002; pp.165). Additionally, it was found that a decrease in readiness and morale could have a negative impact on the army abilities to perform their duties, therefore undermining deployment effectiveness (Elbe; 2002; pp.165). From a realist (state) perspective, it is possible

to argue that this 'hollowing out' and decline in efficiency of African militaries may be perceived by an enemy as an opportunity for attack, therefore making HIV/AIDS a substantial threat to national security (Singer; 2002; pp.10).

However, counter arguments downplaying the seriousness of those above aspects, thus rejecting HIV/AIDS as serious threat to the military should be emphasised. McInnes is sceptical regarding the 'hollowing out' argument, on the ground that armies are always prepared for those personnel losses because of potential combat. Moreover, he further disagrees by highlighting that the number of candidates for entering the armed forces is always higher than the positions available, ensuring a constant supply of new recruits (McInnes; 2006; pp.321). It is stressed that the secrecy over the details on national armed forces allows governments to conceal the weaknesses of their armies, thus refuting the argument that the weakening effects of HIV/AIDS may lead to a external aggression (McInness; 2006; pp. 332). In a wider picture of conflicts, it should be mentioned that HIV/AIDS in Africa is now being used as a weapon of war. It emerged that rape has been used in various African conflicts such as in Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Liberia as well as in Congo as an intentional act to spread the HIV virus (Singer; 2002; pp.20 and Elbe; 2002; pp.167). In those conflicts, soldiers were reported to have deliberately inflicted rape with the aim to transmit the virus to civilian populations as mean to 'heighten the impacts of their attacks and create long lasting harms' to the targeted population (Singer; 2002; pp.20).

A large part of the literature on HIV/AIDS is dedicated to the harmful implications of the epidemic on national militaries and its worsening effects on war, while sometimes omitting the extent to which African governance has been affected (De Waal; 2003; pp.2). It has been argued that HIV/AIDS may put greater strains on already weakened central state institutions, and its eroding effects are said to contribute to potential state failure (Singer; 2002; pp.11). The epidemic can undermine African governance by causing the death of large numbers of personnel essential to running efficient governing institutions. De Waal underlines that long political experience and professional skills are key to well functioning state bodies; however HIV/AIDS has contaminated and is causing major losses among staff possessing those attributes (De Waal; 2003; pp.11). Moreover, this loss in human resources damages the moral of the remaining workers further undercutting the efficiency of those national bodies (De Waal; 2003; pp.12). This has been replicated in several sectors, but the crucial point is that the virus in Africa 'has tended to claim the lives of the most productive members of society, who are not easily replaced' such as teachers, health workers and civil servants (Singer; 2002; pp.11). Second, political discontent concerning the handling of the issue by governments may also arise, threatening the political stability of the state. As central institutions weaken, the confidence in government can decrease, and as McInnes suggests dissatisfaction may emerge from the dependency on foreign aid (McInnes; 2006; pp.317). This situation may provide opportunities for 'coups, revolts and other political and ethnic struggles to secure control over resources' allowing warlords to fill the power vacuum and take control over certain areas (Singer; 2002; pp.12). This demonstrates that HIV/AIDS can contribute to state failure in Africa and thus can be considered as a major threat.

Third, in the event that the state does not entirely collapse, it is not clear whether democratic governance will remain or can be adequately promoted in states with high HIV prevalence. It was highlighted that corruption has risen amongst government officials or civil servants who are unable to afford HIV treatments for themselves or family members through lawful means (De Waal; 2003; pp.12). De Waal is of opinion that HIV/AIDS has negatively impacted population abilities to participate in the political life. He suggests that HIV/AIDS has damaged civil society due to the loss of members in organisations promoting a healthy civil society. Furthermore, because family priorities lie in caring for the sick, it is understandable that the population 'readiness' to take part in elections has diminished (De Waal; 2003; pp.13). This combined with the de-institutionalisation of governments through the loss of experienced personnel can in turn lead to the further centralisation of power in the hand of small ruling elite, which already characterized many African governments; therefore undermining the development of democratic processes at national level (De Waal; 2003; pp.15).

HIV/AIDS can also be involved in the deterioration of identities among the population of Africa, which can subsequently pose threat to African societies. As people infected by the virus are stigmatized, they become more vulnerable (Ostergard; 2002; pp.341). Because, they are HIV positive, their families and communities may reject them, therefore losing a sense of belonging. This situation creates opportunities for warlords to recruit those victims on the ground of ethnic resentment for instance, thus fuelling ethnic violence. A particularly vulnerable population group are children because as noted by Singer, 'this mass of disconnected and disaffected children is particularly at risk to being exploited as child soldiers' (Singer; 2002; pp.16). Here, the notion of 'disconnected' is central because it shows how isolated children whom parents have died from AIDS may constitute a new pool of easy recruitments with no strong attachment (Singer; 2002; pp.15).

For instance, in Sierra Leone, it is estimated that 48,000 children have been used as active soldiers by several violent groups, 12,000 of whom were girls (Brocklehurst; 2010; pp.452). In fact, it has to be noted that girls and women are disproportionately affected by the epidemic. The social constructions of what it means to be female, render women to be more at risk of sexual violence, increasing their likelihood of infection (UNAIDS; 2009; pp.22). However, a major critique of the state-centric approach to HIV/AIDS as a security threat has been put forward. It has been suggested that this outlook only considers women as victims and because of its focus on the state and on the impacts of HIV amongst the military, it 'does not engage with the structural gender conditions under which people, in particular women, become vulnerable' (Seckinelgin et al; 2010; pp.518). Shifting the focus from the military to people's experience, Seckinelgin argues that 'gender vulnerabilities put under stress during Burundi's conflict, owing to the mobility of the population and changing social relations, have been instrumental in creating greater HIV risks' (Seckinelgin et al; 2010; pp.533).

This part aims to concentrate on the process of securitization itself with a focus on language in order to ascertain how HIV/AIDS can and has been articulated as a threat to African security. Central to the following analysis is speech act theory essential component of the securitization approach defined by Buzan, which rests on the assumption that 'by saying words something is done'; meaning that language does not only convey information, it also has a constitutive role (Buzan et al; 1998; pp.26 and Elbe; 2006; pp.124). In other words, security threats do not exist independently, but rather are socially constructed as such through language (Buzan et al; 1998; pp.31). Therefore, policy-makers use speech act as a social activity involving shared understandings, with the objective to frame specific issue as threat to security (Elbe; 2006; pp.124).

As a starting point, it is necessary to draw attention to the very fact that governments and international organisations talk about and address the issue, illustrating that it is not ignored and is in fact part of the political realm. This is most significantly shown by the call for dialogue amongst states at meeting such as the UN Security Council and the General Assembly dedicated to the matter. Buzan highlights that the enunciator 'must be in position of authority', hence the former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan represents such position; that is why his address on the situation of Africa must be subject of investigation (Buzan et al; 1998; pp.33). Buzan characterized a successful speech act if 'it can be argued that this issue is more important than other issues and should take absolute priority', feature observable in Annan's speech when it is stated that 'fight against AIDS in Africa is an immediate priority' (Buzan et al; 1998; pp.24 and Annan; 2000). The sense of emergency and the prioritization is further emphasised in Holbrooke's comment, considering AIDS 'the number one problem facing Africa today' (Holbrooke in Annan; 2000). Moreover, Buzan's criterion that an issue must be 'presented as an existential threat' possessing 'a saliency sufficient to have substantial political effects' is fulfilled by Annan's statement stressing that 'nowhere else has AIDS yet become a threat to economic, social and political stability on the scale that it now is in southern and eastern Africa' (Annan; 2000). It is important to note that Buzan argues that an efficient speech act involves the notion of 'point of no return'. This is clearly visible in the Ethiopian Ambassador's speech at the UN General Assembly, in which the international community as audience has 'no choice than to begin acting now' (Hussein; 2001).

Third, Buzan puts forward that through language of security, 'by labelling it [an issue] as *security*, an agent

claims a need for and a right to treat it by extraordinary means' (Buzan et al; 1998; pp.26). In the context of AIDS in Africa, the Ugandan President Yoweri underlined HIV/AIDS as an existential threat when he pointed out to the military that the epidemic was the real threat to the national army in comparison to war (ICG; 2004; pp.6). As a result the International Crisis Group notes the need for such measures to be introduced and that the Ugandan Government has been at the forefront in doing so. Those have included the allocation of health educator to each battalion, the expulsion of any soldiers diagnosed with the virus, and in the case of the South African army a compulsory HIV screening prior deployment (ICG; 2004; pp.8-16). Finally, the dramatization that Buzan refers to as essential in securitizing an issue has been present in the case of HIV/AIDS. In fact, terms and analogy such as 'global crisis', 'catastrophic', 'greatest threat to humanity' and 'AIDS is as destabilizing as any war' have all contributed to the framing of the epidemic as a security matter (Hussein; 2001and Prins; 2004; pp.940). Overall, a clear case by crucial actors was made to securitize HIV/AIDS especially in the context of the African continent . Vice-President Gore put forward three major points which all build the argument in favour of a move of HIV/AIDS to the security agenda. It is stated that 'the heart of security agenda is protecting lives' and that 'when a single disease threatens everything from economic strength to peacekeeping, we clearly face a security threat'; he concludes that 'it is a security crisis because it threatens not just the individual citizens, but the very institutions that define and defend the character of a society' (Gore in Prins; 2004; pp.941). A clear cut securitization of HIV/AIDS at a state level is exemplified by the US government and its representative David Gordon who frames the issue as a threat to national security on the ground that 'the exacerbation of military conflicts by the presence of AIDS, may draw on US resources'. This explains the adoption of extraordinary measures, which have been translated by the Bush administration engagement to provide $US15 billion plan for the fight against AIDS (Prins; 2004; pp.947).

On the other hand, this process has not occurred in a standardized manner and resistance have been made from several directions. Traditional security community has opposed the securitization of AIDS because it represents a broadening of the security agenda eventually leading to the 'dilution of the meaning of security' (Prins; 2004; pp.941). The epidemic has not always been situated in the security domain and it was long viewed as health issue and dealt with as such domestically by health sectors (Prins; 2004; pp.938). An argument suggests that the 'the region's marginal status in global economics and politics' was a major factor for the past non-securitization of HIV/AIDS (Eberstadt; 2002; pp.23). From an African point of view, it was identified that 'denial at the public scale' was highly common in Africa illustrating the fact that in some cases the epidemic has not been considered as a threat to security and thus causing a major lack of response (Prins; 2004; pp.934). This practise was used in South Africa under Thabo Mbeki who has long been sceptical about the agreed science on HIV and denied the threat posed by HIV/AIDS to his country, which was exemplified by a comment made by his health minister arguing that HIV could be cured by eating more vegetables, regarding antiretroviral drugs as "poison" (Butler; 2007).

Another shocking viewpoint highlighting unwillingness to acknowledge and face the threat of the epidemic and its devastating impacts, was presented by the Democratic Republic of Congo's officials reacting on alleged rapes conducted by soldiers with intentions of spreading the virus, for which it was said they were 'boys being boys', thus legitimizing the acts as natural and underestimating the harms on the affected population (Ostergard; 2002; pp.345). Regarding the epidemic as a non-security matter, economists in the West have even suggested that HIV/AIDS in Africa and its subsequent decrease of population size may provide the conditions for economic growth in the region, ignoring any harmful effect (De Waal; 2003; pp.7). This is reinforced by Prins when accusing the 'rich world' of not being so 'unhappy to see many black deaths arising through inaction' (Prins; 2004; pp.940). Although, the formal securitization of HIV/AIDS has occurred, it is still possible to pin point cases for which it is said that the epidemic implications have been left aside. First, Peter Piot's address to the Security Council in 2003 criticised the institution for failing 'to expressly address AIDS in a number of recent resolutions establishing and extending UN missions' (Piot in ICG; 2004; pp.15). Second, it was argued that the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) has limited its efforts in providing a structured and efficient account of the impacts of HIV/AIDS on the continent

development, therefore offering no basis for further action to slow down the spread of the virus (ICG; 2004; pp.3). In order to conclude about the aspects indicating a reluctance to link AIDS and security, it is possible to claim that some African governments may have prioritize other issues such as the establishment of the rule of law and the decrease in poverty at the expense of tackling the epidemic (ICG; 2004; pp.16).

Buzan lays the emphasis that 'actors and their audiences securitize certain issues as a specific form of political act' (Buzan et al; 1998; pp.33). Securitization is a 'political choice' and for that reason the Copenhagen School specifies that the move to securitization involves 'to weigh the always problematic side effects of applying a mind-set of security against the possible advantages of focus' (Buzan et al; 1998; pp.29). This dilemma relates to the normative concerns that have to be taken into considerations in order to assess whether an issue can be considered as security, because securitization is an act which ultimately has political consequences. In the context of securitizing HIV/AIDS, Elbe argues that the debate necessitates the inclusion of a normative debates so as to efficiently evaluate 'the long-term benefits and drawbacks of using such a security framework to respond to the disease' because it defines the way this is performed (Elbe; 2006; pp.122). It is important to note that the theoretical framework offered by the Copenhagen School tends to regard securitization negatively as it signifies a 'failure to deal with issues as normal politics', implying the dangers that such a move can reveal (Buzan et al; 1998; pp.29).

The first major disadvantage of opting for a security mindset when dealing with HIV/AIDS relates to the upgrading of the issue to the state level, meaning an increase of state involvement in the health and social life of the population, to a significant level it could potentially lead to infringement of civil liberties. Civil society may lose capacity to act upon the issue as it is placed in the hands of the military and the intelligence of states. It has been pointed out that the CIA has increasingly become a central player in outlining the security consequences of HIV/AIDS, potentially resulting in undemocratic responses such as spying or suspending civil rights protection (Elbe; 2006; pp.128). Measures have been taken to restrict the allocation of visas to HIV positive individuals as in the case of the UK. This leads to a second detrimental effect of securitizing HIV/AIDS. It is conceivable that Africans in particular may be targeted and ascribed as a HIV group carrier, subsequently putting a label on the group and generalizing it as threat to security. This is highly condemnable because it allows 'exclusionary and dehumanizing responses' (Elbe; 2006; pp.128).

Third, it is expected that the securitization may introduce a "threat-defence" logic which would lead to a state-centric approach in handling the epidemic as opposed to the health sector-led management. In fact, it is not clear whether the state as primary actor would deliver adequate responses if any in tackling HIV/AIDS, as it is primarily concerned in protecting its core interests and unwilling to go beyond those (Elbe; 2006; pp.129 and Peterson; 2003; pp.80). As a consequence of securitizing HIV/AIDS, governments with limited financial resources are more likely to prioritize their armed forces in providing HIV drugs; while restricting the access from the general population (Elbe; 2006; pp.130). Many organisations in Africa gather their efforts in the aim of lowering the stigma attached to people living with HIV. Their works are necessary 'in terms of normalizing societal attitudes' so as to reduce the marginalization of victims (Elbe; 2006; pp.130). By contrast, a security framework and portrayal of the illness as 'destructive' may produce counterproductive effects because people living with the virus would increasingly be viewed as threat to society (Elbe; 2006; pp.130).

On the other hand, excessive attention on the harmful outcomes, risks concealing potential benefits of securitizing HIV/AIDS. The danger may not come from the excessive involvement of governments but the total absence of it as demonstrated above in the case of South Africa's denial. From this perspective, the securitization may prove particularly useful at drawing attention and triggering responses from national, regional and international actors. In the context of the present theoretical framework, Elbe argues that the signal sent by the linking of HIV/AIDS with security would activate 'a shift out of the non-politicized status in many countries', thus allowing 'a proper politicization of the issue' and increased resources to be allocated (Elbe; 2006; pp.132). For example, giving greater importance to epidemic in the political agenda has

benefited health sectors by becoming better resourced and the securitization at an international level has put pressure on national governments to address the issue. At an economic level, a major barrier preventing African countries from obtaining sufficient HIV medicines constitutes the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS).

These agreements entitle Western pharmaceutical companies to hold the patents on drugs, giving them exclusivity on the productivity and the pricing, generally unaffordable for African states. Hence, the use of HIV/AIDS/security nexus would enable the agreements to be overruled on the ground of "security exceptions" set up by the WTO, compelling pharmaceutical companies to lower the prices (Elbe; 2006; pp.134). Just as the "threat-defence" logic may trigger inadequate responses by states, it may also create an appeal for state to act as they perceive their national self-interests being threatened, whereas humanitarian incentives may not be strong enough for action (Elbe; 2006; pp.134). Although, the securitization of HIV/AIDS in Africa can produce a redirection of funding favouring the military, such a plan can contribute to wider positive effects on the general population, because the military has an essential role to play in addressing the issue. Progress made within the military through education due to extra funding are crucial in decreasing HIV prevalence amongst soldiers, but also highly important to the wider population because the likelihood of soldiers acting as vector is reduced. The crucial point made by Elbe is that such prioritization, as a consequence of securitizing the epidemic should not 'come at the expense of funding for civilian programs' (Elbe; 2006; pp.136). Ultimately, while normalization decreases the likelihood of people being discriminated against, one has to bear in mind that such strategy may introduce the danger of people being less aware about the risks posed by the disease (Elbe; 2006; pp.137). Therefore, it is necessary to emphasise that an equilibrium between normalization and securitization highlighting the dangers of HIV/AIDS has to be maintained.

To conclude, it is essential to stress that HIV/AIDS can be considered as a major threat to African security for several reasons. It has been found that AIDS has had a weakening effect upon African armies by causing considerable losses within the ranks especially amongst individuals with long military experience and reducing soldiers readiness to deploy effectively. From traditional state perspective, AIDS is therefore a threat because it renders state militaries vulnerable to external attacks. In Africa, it is established that the disease is increasingly deteriorating the political stability and establishment of democracy in many countries by eroding their institutional base, in turn increasing corruption and offering opportunities for revolts as desperation grows within the population. Thus, the epidemic creates the conditions of instability within states favourable for armed groups to carry out attacks against the establishment and other enemy ethnic groups. The likelihood of this scenario is reinforced by the loss of identity that groups of population suffer. Those who have lost attachment will turn to violence for survival, which strengthens ethnic groups and their tendency to engage in ethnic violence.

Although this represents worst thinking analysis, ignoring the impacts of AIDS upon the core components of African states would place the continent in greater danger. However, the state-centric approach should not overshadow the benefits that human security view could bring in identifying where the threats of HIV/AIDS lie. Whether HIV/AIDS can be considered a threat, also depends on how the disease is framed. Speech act theory demonstrated that the notion of HIV/AIDS as a threat has been constructed by actors through language of dramatization, thus allowing its shift from a health to a security issue. Nevertheless, this process of securitization remained incomplete as many actors opposed such a much move. Finally, this investigation has uncovered the dangers of framing HIV/AIDS as a security issue including the disproportionate and undemocratic involvement of the state further undermining people lives, while emphasising that state participation as a result of securitization may prove to be the solution as it may generate adequate and wide responses. Contrastingly, in broader terms the non-securitization should always remain an option, however HIV/AIDS in Africa has been let unnoticed long enough.

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